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Cowpea cultivar 92-674

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(54) **COWPEA CULTIVAR 92-674**

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See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A cowpea cultivar designated 92-674 is disclosed. The invention relates to the seeds of cowpea cultivar 92-674, to the plants of cowpea cultivar 92-674, to plant parts of cowpea cultivar 92-674 and to methods for producing a cowpea plant produced by crossing cowpea cultivar 92-674 with itself or with another cowpea cultivar. The invention also relates to methods for producing a cowpea plant containing in its genetic material one or more transgenes and to the transgenic cowpea plants and plant parts produced by those methods. This invention also relates to cowpea cultivars or breeding cultivars and plant parts derived from cowpea cultivar 92-674, to methods for producing other cowpea cultivars, lines or plant parts derived from cowpea cultivar 92-674 and to the cowpea plants, varieties, and their parts derived from use of those methods. The invention further relates to hybrid cowpea seeds, plants and plant parts produced by crossing the cowpea cultivar 92-674 with another cowpea cultivar.

19 Claims, No Drawings

COWPEA CULTIVAR 92-674

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinctive cowpea, *Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp., designated 92-674. All publications cited in this application are herein incorporated by reference.

There are numerous steps in the development of any novel, desirable plant germplasm. Plant breeding begins with the analysis and definition of problems and weaknesses of the current germplasm, the establishment of program goals, and the definition of specific breeding objectives. The next step is selection of germplasm that possesses the traits to meet the program goals. The goal is to combine in a single cultivar an improved combination of desirable traits from the parental germplasm. These important traits may include higher seed yield, resistance to diseases and insects, better stems and roots, tolerance to drought and heat, and better agronomic quality.

Cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* L. Walp.), an annual legume, is also commonly referred to as southern pea, blackeye pea, crowder pea, lubia, niebe, coupe or frijole. Cowpea originated in Africa and is widely grown in Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia and in the southern United States. It is chiefly used as a grain crop, for animal fodder, or as a vegetable. The history of cowpea dates to ancient West African cereal farming, 5 to 6 thousand years ago, where it was closely associated with the cultivation of sorghum and pearl millet.

The cowpea is one of the world's important legume food crops. Annual worldwide production is estimated at 2.5 million metric tons of dry beans harvested from 9 million hectares. An estimated 80,000 hectares of cowpeas are grown in the United States each year, where the crop is grown both as a vegetable and as a dry bean. Plant breeders have played an important role in the development of the cowpea industry as it exists in the United States today.

The protein in cowpea seed is rich in the amino acids, lysine and tryptophan as compared to cereal grains; however, it is deficient in the amino acids methionine and cysteine when compared to animal proteins. Therefore, cowpea seed is valued as a nutritional supplement to cereals and an extender of animal proteins.

Cowpea can be used at all stages of growth as a vegetable crop. The tender green leaves are an important food source in Africa and are prepared as a pot herb, like spinach. Immature snapped pods are used in the same way as snapbeans, often being mixed with other foods. Green cowpea seeds are boiled as a fresh vegetable, or may be canned or frozen. Dry mature seeds are also suitable for boiling and canning.

In many areas of the world, the cowpea is the only available high quality legume hay for livestock feed. Digestibility and yield of certain cultivars have been shown to be comparable to alfalfa. Cowpea may be used green or as dry fodder. It also is used as a green manure crop, a nitrogen fixing crop, or for erosion control. Similar to other grain legumes, cowpea contains trypsin inhibitors which limit protein utilization.

Cowpea is a warm-season annual herbaceous legume. Plant types are often categorized as erect, semi-erect, prostrate (trailing), or climbing. There is much variability within the species. Growth habit ranges from indeterminate to fairly determinate with the non-vining types tending to be more determinate. Cowpea generally is strongly taprooted. Root depth has been measured at 95 inches 8 weeks after seeding.

Cowpea seed ranges in size from the very small wild types up to nearly 14 inches long and the number of seeds per pounds range from 1600 to 4300. Seed shape is a major characteristic correlated with seed development in the pod. Seeds develop a kidney shape if not restricted within the pod. When seed growth is restricted by the pod the seed becomes progressively more globular.

The seed coat can be either smooth or wrinkled and of various colors including white, cream, green, buff, red, brown, and black. Seed may also be speckled, mottled, or blotchy. Many are referred to as "eyed" (blackeye, pinkeye purple hull, etc.) when the white colored hilum is surrounded by another color.

Choice of breeding or selection methods depends on the mode of plant reproduction, the heritability of the trait(s) being improved, and the type of cultivar used commercially (e.g., F₁ hybrid cultivar, pureline cultivar, etc.). For highly heritable traits, a choice of superior individual plants evaluated at a single location will be effective, whereas for traits with low heritability, selection should be based on mean values obtained from replicated evaluations of families of related plants. Popular selection methods commonly include pedigree selection, modified pedigree selection, mass selection, and recurrent selection.

The complexity of inheritance influences choice of the breeding method. Backcross breeding is used to transfer one or a few favorable genes for a highly heritable trait into a desirable cultivar. This approach has been used extensively for breeding disease-resistant cultivars. Various recurrent selection techniques are used to improve quantitatively inherited traits controlled by numerous genes. The use of recurrent selection in self-pollinating crops depends on the ease of pollination, the frequency of successful hybrids from each pollination, and the number of hybrid offspring from each successful cross.

Each breeding program should include a periodic, objective evaluation of the efficiency of the breeding procedure. Evaluation criteria vary depending on the goal and objectives, but should include gain from selection per year based on comparisons to an appropriate standard, overall value of the advanced breeding lines, and number of successful cultivars produced per unit of input (e.g., per year, per dollar expended, etc.).

Promising advanced breeding lines are thoroughly tested and compared to appropriate standards in environments representative of the commercial target area(s) for three or more years. The best lines are candidates for new commercial cultivars; those still deficient in a few traits may be used as parents to produce new populations for further selection.

These processes, which lead to the final step of marketing and distribution, usually take from eight to 12 years from the time the first cross is made. Therefore, development of new cultivars is a time-consuming process that requires precise forward planning, efficient use of resources, and a minimum of changes in direction.

A most difficult task is the identification of individuals that are genetically superior, because for most traits the true genotypic value is masked by other confounding plant traits or environmental factors. One method of identifying a superior plant is to observe its performance relative to other experimental plants and to a widely grown standard cultivar. If a single observation is inconclusive, replicated observations provide a better estimate of its genetic worth.

The goal of cowpea plant breeding is to develop new, unique and superior cowpea cultivars and hybrids. The breeder initially selects and crosses two or more parental lines, followed by repeated selfing and selection, producing

many new genetic combinations. The breeder can theoretically generate billions of different genetic combinations via crossing, selfing and mutations. The breeder has no direct control at the cellular level. Therefore, two breeders will never develop the same line, or even very similar lines, having the same cowpea traits.

Each year, the plant breeder selects the germplasm to advance to the next generation. This germplasm is grown under unique and different geographical, climatic and soil conditions, and further selections are then made, during and at the end of the growing season. The cultivars which are developed are unpredictable. This unpredictability is because the breeder's selection occurs in unique environments, with no control at the DNA level (using conventional breeding procedures), and with millions of different possible genetic combinations being generated. A breeder of ordinary skill in the art cannot predict the final resulting lines he develops, except possibly in a very gross and general fashion. The same breeder cannot produce the same cultivar twice by using the exact same original parents and the same selection techniques. This unpredictability results in the expenditure of large amounts of research monies to develop superior new cowpea cultivars.

The development of new cowpea cultivars requires the development and selection of cowpea varieties, the crossing of these varieties and selection of superior hybrid crosses. The hybrid seed is produced by manual crosses between selected male-fertile parents or by using male sterility systems. These hybrids are selected for certain single gene traits such as pod color, flower color, pubescence color or herbicide resistance which indicate that the seed is truly a hybrid. Additional data on parental lines, as well as the phenotype of the hybrid, influence the breeder's decision whether to continue with the specific hybrid cross.

Pedigree breeding and recurrent selection breeding methods are used to develop cultivars from breeding populations. Breeding programs combine desirable traits from two or more cultivars or various broad-based sources into breeding pools from which cultivars are developed by selfing and selection of desired phenotypes. The new cultivars are evaluated to determine which have commercial potential.

Pedigree breeding is used commonly for the improvement of self-pollinating crops. Two parents which possess favorable, complementary traits are crossed to produce an F_1 . An F_2 population is produced by selfing one or several F_1 's. Selection of the best individuals may begin in the F_2 population; then, beginning in the F_3 , the best individuals in the best families are selected. Replicated testing of families can begin in the F_4 generation to improve the effectiveness of selection for traits with low heritability. At an advanced stage of inbreeding (i.e., F_6 and F_7), the best lines or mixtures of phenotypically similar lines are tested for potential release as new cultivars.

Mass and recurrent selections can be used to improve populations of either self- or cross-pollinating crops. A genetically variable population of heterozygous individuals is either identified or created by intercrossing several different parents. The best plants are selected based on individual superiority, outstanding progeny, or excellent combining ability. The selected plants are intercrossed to produce a new population in which further cycles of selection are continued.

Backcross breeding has been used to transfer genes for a simply inherited, highly heritable trait into a desirable homozygous cultivar or inbred line which is the recurrent parent. The source of the trait to be transferred is called the donor parent. The resulting plant is expected to have the

attributes of the recurrent parent (e.g., cultivar) and the desirable trait transferred from the donor parent. After the initial cross, individuals possessing the phenotype of the donor parent are selected and repeatedly crossed (backcrossed) to the recurrent parent. The resulting plant is expected to have the attributes of the recurrent parent (e.g., cultivar) and the desirable trait transferred from the donor parent.

The single-seed descent procedure in the strict sense refers to planting a segregating population, harvesting a sample of one seed per plant, and using the one-seed sample to plant the next generation. When the population has been advanced from the F_2 to the desired level of inbreeding, the plants from which lines are derived will each trace to different F_2 individuals. The number of plants in a population declines each generation due to failure of some seeds to germinate or some plants to produce at least one seed. As a result, not all of the F_2 plants originally sampled in the population will be represented by a progeny when generation advance is completed.

In a multiple-seed procedure, cowpea breeders commonly harvest one or more pods from each plant in a population and thresh them together to form a bulk. Part of the bulk is used to plant the next generation and part is put in reserve. The procedure has been referred to as modified single-seed descent or the pod-bulk technique.

The multiple-seed procedure has been used to save labor at harvest. It is considerably faster to thresh pods with a machine than to remove one seed from each by hand for the single-seed procedure. The multiple-seed procedure also makes it possible to plant the same number of seeds of a population each generation of inbreeding. Enough seeds are harvested to make up for those plants that did not germinate or produce seed.

In addition to phenotypic observations, the genotype of a plant can also be examined. There are many laboratory-based techniques available for the analysis, comparison and characterization of plant genotype; among these are Isozyme Electrophoresis, Restriction Fragment Length Polymorphisms (RFLPs), Randomly Amplified Polymorphic DNAs (RAPDs), Arbitrarily Primed Polymerase Chain Reaction (AP-PCR), DNA Amplification Fingerprinting (DAF), Sequence Characterized Amplified Regions (SCARs), Amplified Fragment Length polymorphisms (AFLPs), Simple Sequence Repeats (SSRs—which are also referred to as Microsatellites), and Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs).

Isozyme Electrophoresis and RFLPs have been widely used to determine genetic composition. Shoemaker and Olsen, (Molecular Linkage Map of Soybean (*Glycine max* L. Merr.) p 6.131–6.138 in S. J. O'Brien (ed) Genetic Maps: Locus Maps of Complex Genomes, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y., (1993)) developed a molecular genetic linkage map that consisted of 25 linkage groups with about 365 RFLP, 11 RAPD, three classical markers and four isozyme loci. See also, Shoemaker, R. C., RFLP Map of Soybean, p 299–309, in Phillips, R. L. and Vasil, I. K., eds. DNA-Based Markers in Plants, Kluwer Academic Press, Dordrecht, the Netherlands (1994).

SSR technology is currently the most efficient and practical marker technology; more marker loci can be routinely used and more alleles per marker locus can be found using SSRs in comparison to RFLPs. For example, Diwan and Cregan described a highly polymorphic microsatellite locus in soybean with as many as 26 alleles. (Diwan, N. and Cregan, P. B., Theor. Appl. Genet. 95:22–225, 1997.) SNPs may also be used to identify the unique genetic composition

of the invention and progeny varieties retaining that unique genetic composition. Various molecular marker techniques may be used in combination to enhance overall resolution.

Molecular markers, which includes markers identified through the use of techniques such as Isozyme Electrophoresis, RFLPs, RAPDs, AP-PCR, DAF, SCARs, AFLPs, SSRs, and SNPs, may be used in plant breeding. One use of molecular markers is Quantitative Trait Loci (QTL) mapping. QTL mapping is the use of markers which are known to be closely linked to alleles that have measurable effects on a quantitative trait. Selection in the breeding process is based upon the accumulation of markers linked to the positive effecting alleles and/or the elimination of the markers linked to the negative effecting alleles from the plant's genome.

Molecular markers can also be used during the breeding process for the selection of qualitative traits. For example, markers closely linked to alleles or markers containing sequences within the actual alleles of interest can be used to select plants that contain the alleles of interest during a backcrossing breeding program. For example, molecular markers are used in soybean breeding for selection of the trait of resistance to soybean cyst nematode, see U.S. Pat. No. 6,162,967. The markers can also be used to select toward the genome of the recurrent parent and against the markers of the donor parent. This procedure attempts to minimize the amount of genome from the donor parent that remains in the selected plants. It can also be used to reduce the number of crosses back to the recurrent parent needed in a backcrossing program. The use of molecular markers in the selection process is often called Genetic Marker-Enhanced Selection or Marker-Assisted Selection. Molecular markers may also be used to identify and exclude certain sources of germplasm as parental varieties or ancestors of a plant by providing a means of tracking genetic profiles through crosses.

Mutation breeding is another method of introducing new traits into cowpea varieties. Mutations that occur spontaneously or are artificially induced can be useful sources of variability for a plant breeder. The goal of artificial mutagenesis is to increase the rate of mutation for a desired characteristic. Mutation rates can be increased by many different means including temperature, long-term seed storage, tissue culture conditions, radiation (such as X-rays, Gamma rays, neutrons, Beta radiation, or ultraviolet radiation), chemical mutagens (such as base analogues like 5-bromo-uracil), antibiotics, alkylating agents (such as sulfur mustards, nitrogen mustards, epoxides, ethyleneamines, sulfates, sulfonates, sulfones, or lactones), azide, hydroxylamine, nitrous acid or acridines. Once a desired trait is observed through mutagenesis the trait may then be incorporated into existing germplasm by traditional-breeding techniques. Details of mutation breeding can be found in "Principles of Cultivar Development" by Fehr, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993.

The production of double haploids can also be used for the development of homozygous varieties in a breeding program. Double haploids are produced by the doubling of a set of chromosomes from a heterozygous plant to produce a completely homozygous individual. For example, see Wan et al., Theor. Appl. Genet., 77:889-892, 1989

Descriptions of other breeding methods that are commonly used for different traits and crops can be found in one of several reference books (e.g., Allard, 1960; Simmonds, 1979; Sneep et al., 1979; Fehr, 1987).

Proper testing should detect any major faults and establish the level of superiority or improvement over current cultivars. In addition to showing superior performance, there

must be a demand for a new cultivar that is compatible with industry standards or which creates a new market. The introduction of a new cultivar will incur additional costs to the seed producer, the grower, processor and consumer; for special advertising and marketing, altered seed and commercial production practices, and new product utilization. The testing preceding release of a new cultivar should take into consideration research and development costs as well as technical superiority of the final cultivar. For seed-propagated cultivars, it must be feasible to produce seed easily and economically.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention, there is provided a new cowpea cultivar designated 92-674. This invention thus relates to the seeds of cowpea cultivar 92-674, to the plants of cowpea cultivar 92-674 and to methods for producing a cowpea plant produced by crossing the cowpea cultivar 92-674 with itself or another cowpea cultivar, and the creation of variants by mutagenesis or transformation of cowpea cultivar 92-674.

Thus, any such methods using the cowpea cultivar 92-674 are part of this invention: selfing, backcrosses, hybrid production, crosses to populations, and the like. All plants produced using cowpea cultivar 92-674 as at least one parent are within the scope of this invention. Advantageously, the cowpea cultivar could be used in crosses with other, different, cowpea plants to produce first generation (F_1) cowpea hybrid seeds and plants with superior characteristics.

In another aspect, the present invention provides for single or multiple gene converted plants of cowpea cultivar 92-674. The transferred gene(s) may preferably be a dominant or recessive allele. Preferably, the transferred gene(s) will confer such traits as herbicide resistance, insect resistance, resistance for bacterial, fungal, or viral disease, male fertility, male sterility, enhanced nutritional quality, and industrial usage. The gene may be a naturally occurring cowpea gene or a transgene introduced through genetic engineering techniques.

In another aspect, the present invention provides regenerable cells for use in tissue culture of cowpea plant 92-674. The tissue culture will preferably be capable of regenerating plants having all the physiological and morphological characteristics of the foregoing cowpea plant, and of regenerating plants having substantially the same genotype as the foregoing cowpea plant. Preferably, the regenerable cells in such tissue cultures will be embryos, protoplasts, meristematic cells, callus, pollen, leaves, anthers, roots, root tips, flowers, seeds, pods or stems. Still further, the present invention provides cowpea plants regenerated from the tissue cultures of the invention.

Definitions

In the description and tables which follow, a number of terms are used. In order to provide a clear and consistent understanding of the specification and claims, including the scope to be given such terms, the following definitions are provided:

Allele. Allele is any of one or more alternative forms of a gene, all of which relate to one trait or characteristic. In a diploid cell or organism, the two alleles of a given gene occupy corresponding loci on a pair of homologous chromosomes.

Backcrossing. Backcrossing is a process in which a breeder repeatedly crosses hybrid progeny back to one of the

parents, for example, a first generation hybrid F_1 with one of the parental genotypes of the F_1 hybrid.

Cotyledon. A cotyledon is a type of seed leaf. The cotyledon contains the food storage tissues of the seed.

Embryo. The embryo is the small plant contained within a mature seed.

Emergence. This score indicates the ability of the seed to emerge when planted 3" deep in sand and with a controlled temperature of 25° C. The number of plants that emerge each day are counted. Based on this data, each genotype is given a 1 to 9 score based on its rate of emergence and percent of emergence. A score of 9 indicates an excellent rate and percent of emergence, an intermediate score of 5 indicates average ratings and a 1 score indicates a very poor rate and percent of emergence.

Hilum. This refers to the scar left on the seed which marks the place where the seed was attached to the pod prior to the seed being harvested.

Hypocotyl. A hypocotyl is the portion of an embryo or seedling between the cotyledons and the root. Therefore, it can be considered a transition zone between shoot and root.

Phenotypic Score. The Phenotypic Score is a visual rating of general appearance of the cultivar. All visual traits are considered in the score including healthiness, standability, appearance and freedom from disease. Ratings are scored from 1 being poor to 9 being excellent.

Plant Height. Plant height is taken from the top of the soil to the top node of the plant and is measured in centimeters.

Pod. This refers to the fruit of a cowpea plant. It consists of the hull or shell (pericarp) and the cowpea seeds.

Protein Percent. Cowpea seeds contain a considerable amount of protein. Protein is generally measured by NIR spectrophotometry and is reported on an as is percentage basis.

Quantitative Trait Loci (QTL). Quantitative trait loci (QTL) refer to genetic loci that control to some degree numerically representable traits that are usually continuously distributed.

Regeneration. Regeneration refers to the development of a plant from tissue culture.

Seed Protein Peroxidase Activity. Seed protein peroxidase activity refers to a chemical taxonomic technique to separate cultivars based on the presence or absence of the peroxidase enzyme in the seed coat. There are two types of cowpea cultivars: those having high peroxidase activity (dark red color) and those having low peroxidase activity (no color).

Seeds per Pound. Cowpea seeds vary in seed size, therefore, the number of seeds required to make up one pound also varies. This affects the pounds of seed required to plant a given area and can also impact end uses.

Single Gene Converted (Conversion). Single gene converted (conversion) plant refers to plants which are developed by a plant breeding technique called backcrossing wherein essentially all of the desired morphological and physiological characteristics of a cultivar are recovered in addition to the single gene transferred into the cultivar via the backcrossing technique or via genetic engineering.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Cowpea cultivar 92-674 is an early maturing brown crowder that is produced on a bush plant with no basal runners and has a superior plant type to the viney habit of the industry standard brown crowder 'Mississippi Silver'. Cowpea cultivar 92-674 has a concentrated set of bright red pods

similar to cowpea cultivar 'Early Scarlet' while its processed quality of canned peas is equal to that of brown crowder 'Mississippi Silver'.

The cultivar has shown uniformity and stability, as described in the following cultivar description information. It has been self-pollinated a sufficient number of generations with careful attention to uniformity of plant type. The line has been increased with continued observation for uniformity.

Cowpea cultivar 92-674 has the following morphologic and other characteristics (based primarily on data collected at Fayetteville, Ark.).

TABLE 1

| CULTIVAR DESCRIPTION INFORMATION | |
|---|------------------------|
| Plant habit at green shall stage: | Erect |
| Plant size: | 50 cm high at maturity |
| Stem color: | Green |
| Foliage: | Open |
| Leaf color: | Medium green |
| Leaf surface: | Smooth, glossy |
| Flower color: | Tinged |
| First flowering: | 35 days |
| Pod: | |
| Placement: | Below foliage |
| Location: | Bunched |
| Length: | 16 cm |
| Width: | 0.12 cm |
| Curvature: | Straight |
| Constrictions: | Slight |
| Surface: | Dull |
| Color (green shell maturity): | Light purple |
| Color (dry maturity): | Drab |
| Cross section (green shell stage width/height): | 1:1 |
| Seed: | |
| Number seeds/pod: | 10 |
| Length: | 0.16 cm |
| Width: | 0.04 cm |
| Weight: | 220 g/1000 seeds |
| Coat: | Smooth |
| Color pattern: | Single color |
| Primary color: | Buff or clay |
| Secondary color: | None |
| Disease Resistance: | |
| Root Knot Nematode: | Susceptible |

This invention is also directed to methods for producing a cowpea plant by crossing a first parent cowpea plant with a second parent cowpea plant, wherein the first or second cowpea plant is the cowpea plant from cowpea cultivar 92-674. Further, both first and second parent cowpea plants may be from cowpea cultivar 92-674. Therefore, any methods using cowpea cultivar 92-674 are part of this invention: selfing, backcrosses, hybrid breeding, and crosses to populations. Any plants produced using cowpea cultivar 92-674 as at least one parent are within the scope of this invention.

Additional methods include, but are not limited to, expression vectors introduced into plant tissues using a direct gene transfer method such as microprojectile-mediated delivery, DNA injection, electroporation and the like. More preferably expression vectors are introduced into plant tissues by either using microprojectile-mediated delivery with a biolistic device, or by using *Agrobacterium*-mediated transformation. Transformant plants obtained with the protoplasm of the invention are intended to be within the scope of this invention.

Further Embodiments of the Invention

With the advent of molecular biological techniques that have allowed the isolation and characterization of genes that encode specific protein products, scientists in the field of plant biology developed a strong interest in engineering the genome of plants to contain and express foreign genes, or additional, or modified versions of native, or endogenous, genes (perhaps driven by different promoters) in order to alter the traits of a plant in a specific manner. Such foreign additional and/or modified genes are referred to herein collectively as “transgenes”. Over the last fifteen to twenty years several methods for producing transgenic plants have been developed and the present invention in particular embodies also relates to transformed versions of the claimed cultivar or line.

Plant transformation involves the construction of an expression vector which will function in plant cells. Such a vector comprises DNA comprising a gene under control of, or operatively linked to, a regulatory element (for example, a promoter). The expression vector may contain one or more such operably linked gene/regulatory element combinations. The vector(s) may be in the form of a plasmid and can be used alone or in combination with other plasmids to provide transformed cowpea plants using transformation methods as described below to incorporate transgenes into the genetic material of the cowpea plant(s).

Expression Vectors for Cowpea Transformation: Marker Genes

Expression vectors include at least one genetic marker operably linked to a regulatory element (a promoter, for example) that allows transformed cells containing the marker to be either recovered by negative selection, i.e., inhibiting growth of cells that do not contain the selectable marker gene, or by positive selection, i.e., screening for the product encoded by the genetic marker. Many commonly used selectable marker genes for plant transformation are well known in the transformation arts, and include, for example, genes that code for enzymes that metabolically detoxify a selective chemical agent which may be an antibiotic or an herbicide, or genes that encode an altered target which is insensitive to the inhibitor. A few positive selection methods are also known in the art.

One commonly used selectable marker gene for plant transformation is the neomycin phosphotransferase II (nptII) gene which, when under the control of plant regulatory signals, confers resistance to kanamycin. Fraley et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.*, 80:4803 (1983). Another commonly used selectable marker gene is the hygromycin phosphotransferase gene which confers resistance to the antibiotic hygromycin. Vanden Elzen et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.*, 5:299 (1985).

Additional selectable marker genes of bacterial origin that confer resistance to antibiotics include gentamycin acetyltransferase, streptomycin phosphotransferase, and aminoglycoside-3'-adenyl transferase, the bleomycin resistance determinant. Hayford et al., *Plant Physiol.* 86:1216 (1988), Jones et al., *Mol. Gen. Genet.*, 210:86 (1987), Svab et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 14:197 (1990), Hille et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 7:171 (1986). Other selectable marker genes confer resistance to herbicides such as glyphosate, glufosinate or bromoxynil. Comai et al., *Nature* 317:741-744 (1985), Gordon-Kamm et al., *Plant Cell* 2:603-618 (1990) and Stalker et al., *Science* 242:419-423 (1988).

Selectable marker genes for plant transformation not of bacterial origin include for example, mouse dihydrofolate

reductase, plant 5-enolpyruvylshikimate-3-phosphate synthase and plant acetolactate synthase. Eichholtz et al., *Somatic Cell Mol. Genet.* 13:67 (1987), Shah et al., *Science* 233:478 (1986), Charest et al., *Plant Cell Rep.* 8:643 (1990).

Another class of marker genes for plant transformation requires screening of presumptively transformed plant cells rather than direct genetic selection of transformed cells for resistance to a toxic substance such as an antibiotic. These genes are particularly useful to quantify or visualize the spatial pattern of expression of a gene in specific tissues and are frequently referred to as reporter genes because they can be fused to a gene or gene regulatory sequence for the investigation of gene expression. Commonly used genes for screening presumptively transformed cells include β -glucuronidase (GUS), β -galactosidase, luciferase and chloramphenicol acetyltransferase. Jefferson, R. A., *Plant Mol. Biol. Rep.* 5:387 (1987), Teeri et al., *EMBO J.* 8:343 (1989), Koncz et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 84:131 (1987), DeBlock et al., *EMBO J.* 3:1681 (1984).

In vivo methods for visualizing GUS activity that do not require destruction of plant tissue are available. Molecular Probes publication 2908, *Image Green™*, p. 1-4 (1993) and Naleway et al., *J. Cell Biol.* 115:151a (1991). However, these in vivo methods for visualizing GUS activity have not proven useful for recovery of transformed cells because of low sensitivity, high fluorescent backgrounds and limitations associated with the use of luciferase genes as selectable markers.

More recently, a gene encoding Green Fluorescent Protein (GFP) has been utilized as a marker for gene expression in prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells. Chalfie et al., *Science* 263:802 (1994). GFP and mutants of GFP may be used as screenable markers.

Expression Vectors for Cowpea Transformation: Promoters

Genes included in expression vectors must be driven by nucleotide sequence comprising a regulatory element, for example, a promoter. Several types of promoters are now well known in the transformation arts, as are other regulatory elements that can be used alone or in combination with promoters.

As used herein, “promoter” includes reference to a region of DNA upstream from the start of transcription and involved in recognition and binding of RNA polymerase and other proteins to initiate transcription. A “plant promoter” is a promoter capable of initiating transcription in plant cells. Examples of promoters under developmental control include promoters that preferentially initiate transcription in certain tissues, such as leaves, roots, seeds, fibers, xylem vessels, tracheids, or sclerenchyma. Such promoters are referred to as “tissue-preferred”. Promoters which initiate transcription only in a certain tissue are referred to as “tissue-specific”. A “cell type” specific promoter primarily drives expression in certain cell types in one or more organs, for example, vascular cells in roots or leaves. An “inducible” promoter is a promoter which is under environmental control. Examples of environmental conditions that may effect transcription by inducible promoters include anaerobic conditions or the presence of light. Tissue-specific, tissue-preferred, cell type specific, and inducible promoters constitute the class of “non-constitutive” promoters. A “constitutive” promoter is a promoter which is active under most environmental conditions.

A. Inducible Promoters—An inducible promoter is operably linked to a gene for expression in cowpea. Optionally, the inducible promoter is operably linked to a nucleotide sequence encoding a signal sequence which is operably

linked to a gene for expression in cowpea. With an inducible promoter the rate of transcription increases in response to an inducing agent.

Any inducible promoter can be used in the instant invention. See Ward et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 22:361–366 (1993). Exemplary inducible promoters include, but are not limited to, that from the ACEI system which responds to copper (Mett et al., *PNAS* 90:4567–4571 (1993)); In2 gene from maize which responds to benzenesulfonamide herbicide safeners (Hershey et al., *Mol. Gen. Genetics* 227:229–237 (1991) and Gatz et al., *Mol. Gen. Genetics* 243:32–38 (1994)) or Tet repressor from Tn10 (Gatz et al., *Mol. Gen. Genetics* 227:229–237 (1991)). A particularly preferred inducible promoter is a promoter that responds to an inducing agent to which plants do not normally respond. An exemplary inducible promoter is the inducible promoter from a steroid hormone gene, the transcriptional activity of which is induced by a glucocorticosteroid hormone (Scheda et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 88:0421 (1991)).

B. Constitutive Promoters—A constitutive promoter is operably linked to a gene for expression in cowpea or the constitutive promoter is operably linked to a nucleotide sequence encoding a signal sequence which is operably linked to a gene for expression in cowpea.

Many different constitutive promoters can be utilized in the instant invention. Exemplary constitutive promoters include, but are not limited to, the promoters from plant viruses such as the 35S promoter from CaMV (Odell et al., *Nature* 313:810–812 (1985)) and the promoters from such genes as rice actin (McElroy et al., *Plant Cell* 2:163–171 (1990)); ubiquitin (Christensen et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 12:619–632 (1989) and Christensen et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 18:675–689 (1992)); pEMU (Last et al., *Theor. Appl. Genet.* 81:581–588 (1991)); MAS (Velten et al., *EMBO J.* 3:2723–2730 (1984)) and maize H3 histone (Lepetit et al., *Mol. Gen. Genetics* 231:276–285 (1992) and Atanassova et al., *Plant Journal* 2 (3): 291–300 (1992)). The ALS promoter, XbaI/NcoI fragment 5' to the *Brassica napus* ALS3 structural gene (or a nucleotide sequence similarity to said XbaI/NcoI fragment), represents a particularly useful constitutive promoter. See PCT application WO96/30530.

C. Tissue-specific or Tissue-preferred Promoters—A tissue-specific promoter is operably linked to a gene for expression in cowpea. Optionally, the tissue-specific promoter is operably linked to a nucleotide sequence encoding a signal sequence which is operably linked to a gene for expression in cowpea. Plants transformed with a gene of interest operably linked to a tissue-specific promoter produce the protein product of the transgene exclusively, or preferentially, in a specific tissue.

Any tissue-specific or tissue-preferred promoter can be utilized in the instant invention. Exemplary tissue-specific or tissue-preferred promoters include, but are not limited to, a root-preferred promoter such as that from the phaseolin gene (Murai et al., *Science* 23:476–482 (1983) and Sengupta-Gopalan et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 82:3320–3324 (1985)); a leaf-specific and light-induced promoter such as that from cab or rubisco (Simpson et al., *EMBO J.* 4(11): 2723–2729 (1985) and Timko et al., *Nature* 318:579–582 (1985)); an anther-specific promoter such as that from LAT52 (Twell et al., *Mol. Gen. Genetics* 217:240–245 (1989)); a pollen-specific promoter such as that from Zm13 (Guerrero et al., *Mol. Gen. Genetics* 244:161–168 (1993)) or a microspore-preferred promoter such as that from apg (Twell et al., *Sex. Plant Reprod.* 6:217–224 (1993)).

Signal Sequences for Targeting Proteins to Subcellular Compartments

Transport of protein produced by transgenes to a subcellular compartment such as the chloroplast, vacuole, peroxisome, glyoxysome, cell wall or mitochondrion or for secretion into the apoplast, is accomplished by means of operably linking the nucleotide sequence encoding a signal sequence to the 5' and/or 3' region of a gene encoding the protein of interest. Targeting sequences at the 5' and/or 3' end of the structural gene may determine during protein synthesis and processing where the encoded protein is ultimately compartmentalized.

The presence of a signal sequence directs a polypeptide to either an intracellular organelle or subcellular compartment or for secretion to the apoplast. Many signal sequences are known in the art. See, for example Becker et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 20:49 (1992); Close, P. S., Master's Thesis, Iowa State University (1993); Knox, C., et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 9:3–17 (1987); Lerner et al., *Plant Physiol.* 91:124–129 (1989); Fontes et al., *Plant Cell* 3:483–496 (1991); Matsuoka et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 88:834 (1991); Gould et al., *J. Cell. Biol.* 108:1657 (1989); Creissen et al., *Plant J.* 2:129 (1991); Kalderon, et al., *Cell* 39:499–509 (1984); Steifel, et al., *Plant Cell* 2:785–793 (1990).

Foreign Protein Genes and Agronomic Genes

With transgenic plants according to the present invention, a foreign protein can be produced in commercial quantities. Thus, techniques for the selection and propagation of transformed plants, which are well understood in the art, yield a plurality of transgenic plants which are harvested in a conventional manner, and a foreign protein then can be extracted from a tissue of interest or from total biomass. Protein extraction from plant biomass can be accomplished by known methods which are discussed, for example, by Heney and Orr, *Anal. Biochem.* 114:92–6 (1981).

According to a preferred embodiment, the transgenic plant provided for commercial production of foreign protein is a cowpea plant. In another preferred embodiment, the biomass of interest is seed. For the relatively small number of transgenic plants that show higher levels of expression, a genetic map can be generated, primarily via conventional RFLP, PCR and SSR analysis, which identifies the approximate chromosomal location of the integrated DNA molecule. For exemplary methodologies in this regard, see Glick and Thompson, *Methods in Plant Molecular Biology and Biotechnology*, CRC Press, Boca Raton 269:284 (1993). Map information concerning chromosomal location is useful for proprietary protection of a subject transgenic plant. If unauthorized propagation is undertaken and crosses made with other germplasm, the map of the integration region can be compared to similar maps for suspect plants, to determine if the latter have a common parentage with the subject plant. Map comparisons would involve hybridizations, RFLP, PCR, SSR and sequencing, all of which are conventional techniques.

Likewise, by means of the present invention, agronomic genes can be expressed in transformed plants. More particularly, plants can be genetically engineered to express various phenotypes of agronomic interest. Exemplary genes implicated in this regard include, but are not limited to, those categorized below:

1. Genes that Confer Resistance to Pests or Disease and that Encode:

A. Plant disease resistance genes. Plant defenses are often activated by specific interaction between the product of a disease resistance gene (R) in the plant and the product of a

corresponding avirulence (Avr) gene in the pathogen. A plant cultivar can be transformed with one or more cloned resistance genes to engineer plants that are resistant to specific pathogen strains. See, for example Jones et al., *Science* 266:789 (1994) (cloning of the tomato Cf-9 gene for resistance to *Cladosporium fulvum*); Martin et al., *Science* 262:1432 (1993) (tomato Pto gene for resistance to *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. tomato encodes a protein kinase); Mindrinos et al., *Cell* 78:1089 (1994) (*Arabidopsis* RSP2 gene for resistance to *Pseudomonas syringae*).

B. A gene conferring resistance to a pest, such as soybean cyst nematode. See e.g., PCT Application WO96/30517; PCT Application WO93/19181.

C. A *Bacillus thuringiensis* protein, a derivative thereof or a synthetic polypeptide modeled thereon. See, for example, Geiser et al., *Gene* 48:109 (1986), who disclose the cloning and nucleotide sequence of a Bt- δ -endotoxin gene. Moreover, DNA molecules encoding δ -endotoxin genes can be purchased from American Type Culture Collection, Manassas, Va., for example, under ATCC Accession Nos. 40098, 67136, 31995 and 31998.

D. A lectin. See, for example, the disclosure by Van Damme et al., *Plant Molec. Biol.* 24:25 (1994), of the nucleotide sequences of several *Clivia miniata* mannose-binding lectin genes.

E. A vitamin-binding protein such as avidin. See PCT application US93/06487. The application teaches the use of avidin and avidin homologues as larvicides against insect pests.

F. An enzyme inhibitor, for example, a protease or proteinase inhibitor or an amylase inhibitor. See, for example, Abe et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 262:16793 (1987) (nucleotide sequence of rice cysteine proteinase inhibitor); Huub et al., *Plant Molec. Biol.* 21:985 (1993) (nucleotide sequence of cDNA encoding tobacco proteinase inhibitor I); Sumitani et al., *Biosci. Biotech. Biochem.* 57:1243 (1993) (nucleotide sequence of *Streptomyces nitrosporeus* α -amylase inhibitor) and U.S. Pat. No. 5,494,813 (Hepher and Atkinson, issued Feb. 27, 1996).

G. An insect-specific hormone or pheromone such as an ecdysteroid or juvenile hormone, variants thereof, mimetics based thereon, or antagonists or agonists thereof. See, for example, the disclosure by Hammock et al., *Nature* 344:458 (1990), of baculovirus expression of cloned juvenile hormone esterase, an inactivator of juvenile hormone.

H. An insect-specific peptide or neuropeptide which, upon expression, disrupts the physiology of the affected pest. For example, see the disclosures of Regan, *J. Biol. Chem.* 269:9 (1994) (expression cloning yields DNA coding for insect diuretic hormone receptor), and Pratt et al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Comm.* 163:1243 (1989) (an allostatin is identified in *Diploptera puntata*). See also U.S. Pat. No. 5,266,317 to Tomalski et al., which discloses genes encoding insect-specific, paralytic neurotoxins.

I. An insect-specific venom produced in nature by a snake, a wasp, etc. For example, see Pang et al., *Gene* 116:165 (1992), for disclosure of heterologous expression in plants of a gene coding for a scorpion insectotoxic peptide.

J. An enzyme responsible for a hyperaccumulation of a monoterpene, a sesquiterpene, a steroid, hydroxamic acid, a phenylpropanoid derivative or another non-protein molecule with insecticidal activity.

K. An enzyme involved in the modification, including the post-translational modification, of a biologically active molecule; for example, a glycolytic enzyme, a proteolytic enzyme, a lipolytic enzyme, a nuclease, a cyclase, a transaminase, an esterase, a hydrolase, a phosphatase, a kinase,

a phosphorylase, a polymerase, an elastase, a chitinase and a glucanase, whether natural or synthetic. See PCT application WO 93/02197 in the name of Scott et al., which discloses the nucleotide sequence of a callase gene. DNA molecules which contain chitinase-encoding sequences can be obtained, for example, from the ATCC under Accession Nos. 39637 and 67152. See also Kramer et al., *Insect Biochem. Molec. Biol.* 23:691 (1993), who teach the nucleotide sequence of a cDNA encoding tobacco hornworm chitinase, and Kawalleck et al., *Plant Molec. Biol.* 21:673 (1993), who provide the nucleotide sequence of the parsley ubi4-2 polyubiquitin gene.

L. A molecule that stimulates signal transduction. For example, see the disclosure by Botella et al., *Plant Molec. Biol.* 24:757 (1994), of nucleotide sequences for mung bean calmodulin cDNA clones, and Griess et al., *Plant Physiol.* 104:1467 (1994), who provide the nucleotide sequence of a maize calmodulin cDNA clone.

M. A hydrophobic moment peptide. See PCT application WO95/16776 (disclosure of peptide derivatives of tachyplesin which inhibit fungal plant pathogens) and PCT application WO95/18855 (teaches synthetic antimicrobial peptides that confer disease resistance).

N. A membrane permease, a channel former or a channel blocker. For example, see the disclosure of Jaynes et al., *Plant Sci* 89:43 (1993), of heterologous expression of a cecropin- β lytic peptide analog to render transgenic tobacco plants resistant to *Pseudomonas solanacearum*.

O. A viral-invasive protein or a complex toxin derived therefrom. For example, the accumulation of viral coat proteins in transformed plant cells imparts resistance to viral infection and/or disease development effected by the virus from which the coat protein gene is derived, as well as by related viruses. See Beachy et al., *Ann. Rev. Phytopathol.* 28:451 (1990). Coat protein-mediated resistance has been conferred upon transformed plants against alfalfa mosaic virus, cucumber mosaic virus, tobacco streak virus, potato virus X, potato virus Y, tobacco etch virus, tobacco rattle virus and tobacco mosaic virus. Id.

P. An insect-specific antibody or an immunotoxin derived therefrom. Thus, an antibody targeted to a critical metabolic function in the insect gut would inactivate an affected enzyme, killing the insect. Cf. Taylor et al., Abstract #497, Seventh Int'l Symposium on Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions (Edinburgh, Scotland) (1994) (enzymatic inactivation in transgenic tobacco via production of single-chain antibody fragments).

Q. A virus-specific antibody. See, for example, Tavladoraki et al., *Nature* 366:469 (1993), who show that transgenic plants expressing recombinant antibody genes are protected from virus attack.

R. A developmental-arrestive protein produced in nature by a pathogen or a parasite. Thus, fungal endo- α -1,4-D-polygalacturonases facilitate fungal colonization and plant nutrient release by solubilizing plant cell wall homo- α -1,4-D-galacturonase. See Lamb et al., *Bio/Technology* 10:1436 (1992). The cloning and characterization of a gene which encodes a bean endopolygalacturonase-inhibiting protein is described by Toubart et al., *Plant J.* 2:367 (1992).

S. A developmental-arrestive protein produced in nature by a plant. For example, Logemann et al., *Bio/Technology* 10:305 (1992), have shown that transgenic plants expressing the barley ribosome-inactivating gene have an increased resistance to fungal disease.

T. Genes involved in the Systemic Acquired Resistance (SAR) Response and/or the pathogenesis-related genes. Briggs, S. *Current Biology*, 5(2) (1995).

U. Antifungal genes. See Cornelissen and Melchers, *Plant Physiol.*, 101:709–712 (1993); Parijs et al., *Planta* 183: 258–264 (1991) and Bushnell et al., *Can. J. of Plant Path.* 20(2):137–149 (1998).

2. Genes that Confer Resistance to an Herbicide, for Example:

A. An herbicide that inhibits the growing point or meristem, such as an imidazolinone or a sulfonylurea. Exemplary genes in this category code for mutant ALS and AHAS enzyme as described, for example, by Lee et al., *EMBO J.* 7:1241 (1988), and Miki et al., *Theor. Appl. Genet.* 80:449 (1990), respectively.

B. Glyphosate (resistance conferred by mutant 5-enolpyruvylshikimate-3-phosphate synthase (EPSP) and aroA genes, respectively) and other phosphono compounds such as glufosinate (phosphinothricin acetyl transferase (PAT) and *Streptomyces hygroscopicus* PAT, bar, genes), and pyridinoxy or phenoxy propionic acids and cyclohexones (ACCase inhibitor-encoding genes). See, for example, U.S. Pat. No. 4,940,835 to Shah, et al., which discloses the nucleotide sequence of a form of EPSP which can confer glyphosate resistance. A DNA molecule encoding a mutant aroA gene can be obtained under ATCC accession number 39256, and the nucleotide sequence of the mutant gene is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,769,061 to Comai. European patent application No. 0 333 033 to Kumada et al., and U.S. Pat. No. 4,975,374 to Goodman et al., disclose nucleotide sequences of glutamine synthetase genes which confer resistance to herbicides such as L-phosphinothricin. The nucleotide sequence of a PAT gene is provided in European application No. 0 242 246 to Leemans et al. DeGreef et al., *Bio/Technology* 7:61 (1989), describe the production of transgenic plants that express chimeric bar genes coding for phosphinothricin acetyl transferase activity. Exemplary of genes conferring resistance to phenoxy propionic acids and cyclohexones, such as sethoxydim and haloxyfop are the Acc1-S1, Acc1-S2 and Acc1-S3 genes described by Marshall et al., *Theor. Appl. Genet.* 83:435 (1992).

C. An herbicide that inhibits photosynthesis, such as a triazine (psbA and gs+ genes) or a benzonitrile (nitrilase gene). Przibila et al., *Plant Cell* 3:169 (1991), describe the transformation of *Chlamydomonas* with plasmids encoding mutant psbA genes. Nucleotide sequences for nitrilase genes are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,810,648 to Stalker, and DNA molecules containing these genes are available under ATCC Accession Nos. 53435, 67441, and 67442. Cloning and expression of DNA coding for a glutathione S-transferase is described by Hayes et al., *Biochem. J.* 285:173 (1992).

D. Acetohydroxy acid synthase, which has been found to make plants that express this enzyme resistant to multiple types of herbicides, has been introduced into a variety of plants. See Hattori et al., *Mol. Gen. Genet.* 246:419, 1995. Other genes that confer tolerance to herbicides include a gene encoding a chimeric protein of rat cytochrome P4507A1 and yeast NADPH-cytochrome P450 oxidoreductase (Shiota et al., *Plant Physiol.*, 106:17, 1994), genes for glutathione reductase and superoxide dismutase (Aono et al., *Plant Cell Physiol.* 36:1687, 1995), and genes for various phosphotransferases (Datta et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 20:619, 1992).

E. Protoporphyrinogen oxidase (protoph) is necessary for the production of chlorophyll, which is necessary for all plant survival. The protoph enzyme serves as the target for a variety of herbicidal compounds. These herbicides also inhibit growth of all the different species of plants present, causing their total destruction. The development of plants containing altered protoph activity which are resistant to these

herbicides are described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,288,306; 6,282,837; 5,767,373; and international publication WO 01/12825.

3. Genes that Confer or Contribute to a Value-Added Trait, Such as:

A. Modified fatty acid metabolism, for example, by transforming a plant with an antisense gene of stearyl-ACP desaturase to increase stearic acid content of the plant. See Knultzon et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 89:2624 (1992).

B. Decreased phytate content—1) Introduction of a phytase-encoding gene would enhance breakdown of phytate, adding more free phosphate to the transformed plant. For example, see Van Hartingsveldt et al., *Gene* 127:87 (1993), for a disclosure of the nucleotide sequence of an *Aspergillus niger* phytase gene. 2) A gene could be introduced that reduced phytate content. In maize for example, this could be accomplished by cloning and then reintroducing DNA associated with the single allele which is responsible for maize mutants characterized by low levels of phytic acid. See Raboy et al., *Maydica* 35:383 (1990).

C. Modified carbohydrate composition effected, for example, by transforming plants with a gene coding for an enzyme that alters the branching pattern of starch. See Shiroza et al., *J. Bacteol.* 170:810 (1988) (nucleotide sequence of *Streptococcus mutants* fructosyltransferase gene); Steinmetz et al., *Mol. Gen. Genet.* 20:220 (1985) (nucleotide sequence of *Bacillus subtilis* levansucrase gene); Pen et al., *Bio/Technology* 10:292 (1992) (production of transgenic plants that express *Bacillus licheniformis* α -amylase); Elliot et al., *Plant Molec. Biol.* 21:515 (1993) (nucleotide sequences of tomato invertase genes); Sogaard et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 268:22480 (1993) (site-directed mutagenesis of barley α -amylase gene), and Fisher et al., *Plant Physiol.* 102:1045 (1993) (maize endosperm starch branching enzyme II).

Methods for Cowpea Transformation

Numerous methods for plant transformation have been developed, including biological and physical plant transformation protocols. See, for example, Miki et al., "Procedures for Introducing Foreign DNA into Plants" in *Methods in Plant Molecular Biology and Biotechnology*, Glick B. R. and Thompson, J. E. Eds. (CRC Press, Inc., Boca Raton, 1993) pages 67–88. In addition, expression vectors and in vitro culture methods for plant cell or tissue transformation and regeneration of plants are available. See, for example, Gruber et al., "Vectors for Plant Transformation" in *Methods in Plant Molecular Biology and Biotechnology*, Glick B. R. and Thompson, J. E. Eds. (CRC Press, Inc., Boca Raton, 1993) pages 89–119.

A. *Agrobacterium*-mediated Transformation—One method for introducing an expression vector into plants is based on the natural transformation system of *Agrobacterium*. See, for example, Horsch et al., *Science* 227:1229 (1985). *A. tumefaciens* and *A. rhizogenes* are plant pathogenic soil bacteria which genetically transform plant cells. The Ti and Ri plasmids of *A. tumefaciens* and *A. rhizogenes*, respectively, carry genes responsible for genetic transformation of the plant. See, for example, Kado, C. I., *Crit. Rev. Plant Sci.* 10:1 (1991). Descriptions of *Agrobacterium* vector systems and methods for *Agrobacterium*-mediated gene transfer are provided by Gruber et al., supra, Miki et al., supra, and Moloney et al., *Plant Cell Reports* 8:238 (1989). See also, U.S. Pat. No. 5,563,055 (Townsend and Thomas), issued Oct. 8, 1996.

B. Direct Gene Transfer—Several methods of plant transformation, collectively referred to as direct gene transfer,

have been developed as an alternative to *Agrobacterium*-mediated transformation. A generally applicable method of plant transformation is microprojectile-mediated transformation wherein DNA is carried on the surface of microprojectiles measuring 1 to 4 μm . The expression vector is introduced into plant tissues with a biolistic device that accelerates the microprojectiles to speeds of 300 to 600 m/s which is sufficient to penetrate plant cell walls and membranes. Sanford et al., *Part. Sci. Technol.* 5:27 (1987); Sanford, J. C., *Trends Biotech.* 6:299 (1988); Klein et al., *Bio/Technology* 6:559–563 (1988); Sanford, J. C., *Physiol Plant* 7:206 (1990); Klein et al., *Biotechnology* 10:268 (1992). See also U.S. Pat. No. 5,015,580 (Christou, et al.), issued May 14, 1991; U.S. Pat. No. 5,322,783 (Tomes, et al.), issued Jun. 21, 1994.

Another method for physical delivery of DNA to plants is sonication of target cells. Zhang et al., *Bio/Technology* 9:996 (1991). Alternatively, liposome and spheroplast fusion have been used to introduce expression vectors into plants. Deshayes et al., *EMBO J.*, 4:2731 (1985), Christou et al., *Proc Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 84:3962 (1987). Direct uptake of DNA into protoplasts using CaCl_2 precipitation, polyvinyl alcohol or poly-L-ornithine has also been reported. Hain et al., *Mol. Gen. Genet.* 199:161 (1985) and Draper et al., *Plant Cell Physiol.* 23:451 (1982). Electroporation of protoplasts and whole cells and tissues have also been described. Donn et al., In Abstracts of VIIth International Congress on Plant Cell and Tissue Culture IAPTC, A2-38, p 53 (1990); D'Halluin et al., *Plant Cell* 4:1495–1505 (1992) and Spencer et al., *Plant Mol. Biol.* 24:51–61 (1994).

Following transformation of cowpea target tissues, expression of the above-described selectable marker genes allows for preferential selection of transformed cells, tissues and/or plants, using regeneration and selection methods now well known in the art.

The foregoing methods for transformation would typically be used for producing a transgenic cultivar. The transgenic cultivar could then be crossed with another (non-transformed or transformed) cultivar, in order to produce a new transgenic cultivar. Alternatively, a genetic trait which has been engineered into a particular cowpea line using the foregoing transformation techniques could be moved into another line using traditional backcrossing techniques that are well known in the plant breeding arts. For example, a backcrossing approach could be used to move an engineered trait from a public, non-elite cultivar into an elite cultivar, or from a cultivar containing a foreign gene in its genome into a cultivar or cultivars which do not contain that gene. As used herein, "crossing" can refer to a simple X by Y cross, or the process of backcrossing, depending on the context.

Single Gene Conversions of Cowpea

When the term cowpea plant is used in the context of the present invention, this also includes any single gene conversions of that cultivar. The term single gene converted plant as used herein refers to those cowpea plants which are developed by a plant breeding technique called backcrossing wherein essentially all of the desired morphological and physiological characteristics of a cultivar are recovered in addition to the single gene transferred into the cultivar via the backcrossing technique. Backcrossing methods can be used with the present invention to improve or introduce a characteristic into the cultivar. The term backcrossing as used herein refers to the repeated crossing of a hybrid progeny back to the recurrent parent, i.e., crossing back 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or more times to the recurrent parent. The

parental cowpea plant which contributes the gene for the desired characteristic is termed the nonrecurrent or donor parent. This terminology refers to the fact that the nonrecurrent parent is used one time in the backcross protocol and therefore does not recur. The parental cowpea plant to which the gene or genes from the nonrecurrent parent are transferred is known as the recurrent parent as it is used for several rounds in the backcrossing protocol (Poehlman & Sleper, 1994; Fehr, 1987). In a typical backcross protocol, the original cultivar of interest (recurrent parent) is crossed to a second cultivar (nonrecurrent parent) that carries the single gene of interest to be transferred. The resulting progeny from this cross are then crossed again to the recurrent parent and the process is repeated until a cowpea plant is obtained wherein essentially all of the desired morphological and physiological characteristics of the recurrent parent are recovered in the converted plant, in addition to the single transferred gene from the nonrecurrent parent, as determined at the 5% significance level when grown in the same environmental conditions.

The selection of a suitable recurrent parent is an important step for a successful backcrossing procedure. The goal of a backcross protocol is to alter or substitute a single trait or characteristic in the original cultivar. To accomplish this, a single gene of the recurrent cultivar is modified or substituted with the desired gene from the nonrecurrent parent, while retaining essentially all of the rest of the desired genetic, and therefore the desired physiological and morphological, constitution of the original cultivar. The choice of the particular nonrecurrent parent will depend on the purpose of the backcross; one of the major purposes is to add some commercially desirable, agronomically important trait to the plant. The exact backcrossing protocol will depend on the characteristic or trait being altered to determine an appropriate testing protocol. Although backcrossing methods are simplified when the characteristic being transferred is a dominant allele, a recessive allele may also be transferred. In this instance it may be necessary to introduce a test of the progeny to determine if the desired characteristic has been successfully transferred.

Many single gene traits have been identified that are not regularly selected for in the development of a new cultivar but that can be improved by backcrossing techniques. Single gene traits may or may not be transgenic; examples of these traits include but are not limited to, male sterility, waxy starch, herbicide resistance, resistance for bacterial, fungal, or viral disease, insect resistance, male fertility, enhanced nutritional quality, industrial usage, yield stability and yield enhancement. These genes are generally inherited through the nucleus. Several of these single gene traits are described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,959,185, 5,973,234 and 5,977,445.

Further reproduction of the cultivar can occur by tissue culture and regeneration. Tissue culture of various plant tissues and regeneration of plants therefrom is well known and widely published. For example, reference may be had to Komatsuda, T. et al., *Crop Sci.* 31:333–337 (1991); Stephens, P. A., et al., *Theor. Appl. Genet.* (1991) 82:633–635; Komatsuda, T. et al., *Plant Cell, Tissue and Organ Culture*, 28:103–113 (1992); Dhir, S. et al., *Plant Cell Reports* (1992) 11:285–289; Pandey, P. et al., *Japan J. Breed.* 42:1–5 (1992); and Shetty, K., et al., *Plant Science* 81:245–251 (1992); as well as U.S. Pat. No. 5,024,944 issued Jun. 18, 1991 to Collins et al., and U.S. Pat. No. 5,008,200 issued Apr. 16, 1991 to Ranch et al. Thus, another aspect of this invention is to provide cells which, upon

growth and differentiation, produce cowpea plants having the physiological and morphological characteristics of cowpea cultivar 92-674.

As used herein, the term "tissue culture" indicates a composition comprising isolated cells of the same or a different type or a collection of such cells organized into parts of a plant. Exemplary types of tissue cultures are protoplasts, calli, plant clumps, and plant cells that can generate tissue culture that are intact in plants or parts of plants, such as embryos, pollen, flowers, seeds, pods, leaves, stems, roots, root tips, anthers, and the like. Means for preparing and maintaining plant tissue culture are well known in the art. By way of example, a tissue culture comprising organs has been used to produce regenerated plants. See also U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,959,185; 5,973,234 and 5,977,445; Brar, M. S., et al, *In Vitro Cell. Deve. Biol.-Plant* 35:8-12, January-February, 1999 and Brar, M. S., et al, *In Vitro Cell. Deve. Biol.-Plant* 35:222-225, May-June, 1999.

This invention also is directed to methods for producing a cowpea plant by crossing a first parent cowpea plant with a second parent cowpea plant wherein the first or second parent cowpea plant is a cowpea plant of the cultivar 92-674. Further, both first and second parent cowpea plants can come from the cowpea cultivar 92-674. Thus, any such methods using the cowpea cultivar 92-674 are part of this invention: selfing, backcrosses, hybrid production, crosses to populations, and the like. All plants produced using cowpea cultivar 92-674 as at least one parent are within the scope of this invention, including those developed from varieties derived from cowpea cultivar 92-674. Advantageously, cowpea cultivar 92-674 could be used in crosses with other, different, cowpea plants to produce first generation (F_1) cowpea hybrid seeds and plants with superior characteristics. The cultivar of the invention can also be used for transformation where exogenous genes are introduced and expressed by the cultivar of the invention. Genetic variants created either through traditional breeding methods using cultivar 92-674 or through transformation of cultivar 92-674 by any of a number of protocols known to those of skill in the art are intended to be within the scope of this invention.

The following describes breeding methods that may be used with cultivar 92-674 in the development of further cowpea plants. One such embodiment is a method for developing a 92-674 progeny cowpea plant in a cowpea plant breeding program comprising: obtaining the cowpea plant, or a part thereof, of cultivar 92-674 utilizing said plant or plant part as a source of breeding material and selecting a 92-674 progeny plant with molecular markers in common with 92-674 and/or with morphological and/or physiological characteristics selected from the characteristics listed in Tables 1 or 2. Breeding steps that may be used in the cowpea plant breeding program include pedigree breeding, backcrossing, mutation breeding, and recurrent selection. In conjunction with these steps, techniques such as RFLP-enhanced selection, genetic marker-enhanced selection (for example SSR markers) and the making of double haploids may be utilized.

Another method involves producing a population of cultivar 92-674 progeny cowpea plants, comprising crossing cultivar 92-674 with another cowpea plant, thereby producing a population of cowpea plants, which, on average, derive 50% of their alleles from cultivar 92-674. A plant of this population may be selected and repeatedly selfed or sibbed with a cowpea cultivar resulting from these successive filial generations. One embodiment of this invention is the cowpea cultivar produced by this method and that has obtained at least 50% of its alleles from cultivar 92-674.

One of ordinary skill in the art of plant breeding would know how to evaluate the traits of two plant varieties to determine if there is no significant difference between the two traits expressed by those varieties. For example, see Fehr and Walt, *Principles of Cultivar Development*, p 261-286 (1987). Thus the invention includes cowpea cultivar 92-674 progeny cowpea plants comprising a combination of at least two 92-674 traits selected from the group consisting of those listed in Tables 1 and 2 or the 92-674 combination of traits listed in the Summary of the Invention, so that said progeny cowpea plant is not significantly different for said traits than cowpea cultivar 92-674 as determined at the 5% significance level when grown in the same environmental conditions. Using techniques described herein, molecular markers may be used to identify said progeny plant as an 92-674 progeny plant. Mean trait values may be used to determine whether trait differences are significant, and preferably the traits are measured on plants grown under the same environmental conditions. Once such a cultivar is developed its value is substantial since it is important to advance the germplasm base as a whole in order to maintain or improve traits such as yield, disease resistance, pest resistance, and plant performance in extreme environmental conditions.

Progeny of cultivar 92-674 may also be characterized through their filial relationship with cowpea cultivar 92-674, as for example, being within a certain number of breeding crosses of cowpea cultivar 92-674. A breeding cross is a cross made to introduce new genetics into the progeny, and is distinguished from a cross, such as a self or a sib cross, made to select among existing genetic alleles. The lower the number of breeding crosses in the pedigree, the closer the relationship between cowpea cultivar 92-674 and its progeny. For example, progeny produced by the methods described herein may be within 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 breeding crosses of cowpea cultivar 92-674.

As used herein, the term plant includes plant cells, plant protoplasts, plant cell tissue cultures from which cowpea plants can be regenerated, plant calli, plant clumps, and plant cells that are intact in plants or parts of plants, such as embryos, pollen, ovules, flowers, pods, leaves, roots, root tips, anthers, and the like.

The seed of cowpea cultivar 92-674, the plant produced from the seed, the hybrid cowpea plant produced from the crossing of the cultivar with any other cowpea plant, hybrid seed, and various parts of the hybrid cowpea plant can be utilized for human food, livestock feed, and as a raw material in industry.

Tables

In Table 2 that follows, the yield of cowpea cultivar 92-674 is compared to commercial cowpea cultivar 'Mississippi Silver'. In the table, column 1 shows the year and columns 2 and 3 show the yield in pounds per acre of cowpea cultivars 92-674 and 'Mississippi Silver,' respectively, in Kibler, Ark.

TABLE 2

| Comparison of Yields between Cowpea Cultivars '92-674' and 'Mississippi Silver' | | |
|---|--------|--------------------|
| Year | 92-674 | Mississippi Silver |
| 1999 | 852 | 801 |
| 2000 | 808 | 750 |

TABLE 2-continued

| Comparison of Yields between Cowpea Cultivars '92-674' and 'Mississippi Silver' | | |
|--|--------|--------------------|
| Year | 92-674 | Mississippi Silver |
| 2001 | 523 | 339 |
| 2002 | 722 | 1042 |
| 2003 | 497 | 733 |
| Mean | 780 | 880 |

Deposit Information

A deposit of the University of Arkansas proprietary cowpea cultivar designated 92-674 disclosed above and recited in the appended claims has been made with the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC), 10801 University Boulevard, Manassas, Va. 20110. The date of deposit was Mar. 3, 2006. The deposit of 2,500 seeds was taken from the same deposit maintained by Arkansas Crop Variety Improvement Program since prior to the filing date of this application. All restrictions upon the deposit have been removed, and the deposit is intended to meet all of the requirements of 37 C.F.R. 1.801-1.809. The ATCC accession number is PTA-7417. The deposit will be maintained in the depository for a period of 30 years, or 5 years after the last request, or for the effective life of the patent, whichever is longer, and will be replaced as necessary during that period.

What is claimed is:

1. A seed of cowpea cultivar 92-674, wherein a representative sample of seed of said cultivar was deposited under ATCC Accession No. PTA-7417.

2. A cowpea plant, or a part thereof, produced by growing the seed of claim 1.

3. A tissue culture of cells produced from the plant of claim 2, wherein said cells of the tissue culture are produced from a plant part selected from the group consisting of leaves, pollen, embryos, cotyledons, hypocotyls, meristematic cells, roots, root tips, pistils, anthers, flowers, stems and pods.

4. A protoplast produced from the plant of claim 2.

5. A protoplast produced from the tissue culture of claim 3.

6. A cowpea plant regenerated from the tissue culture of claim 3, wherein the plant has all the morphological and physiological characteristics of cultivar 92-674.

7. A method for producing an F1 hybrid cowpea seed, wherein the method comprises crossing the plant of claim 2 with a different cowpea plant and harvesting the resultant F1 hybrid cowpea seed.

8. A method of producing an herbicide resistant cowpea plant wherein the method comprises transforming the cowpea plant of claim 2 with a transgene that confers resistance to an herbicide selected from the group consisting of imidazolinone, sulfonylurea, glyphosate, glufosinate, L-phosphinothricin, triazine and benzonitrile.

9. An herbicide resistant cowpea plant produced by the method of claim 8.

10. A method of producing an insect resistant cowpea plant wherein the method comprises transforming the cowpea plant of claim 2 with a transgene that confers insect resistance.

11. An insect resistant cowpea plant produced by the method of claim 10.

12. The cowpea plant of claim 11, wherein the transgene encodes a *Bacillus thuringiensis* endotoxin.

13. A method of producing a disease resistant cowpea plant wherein the method comprises transforming the cowpea plant of claim 2 with a transgene that confers disease resistance.

14. A disease resistant cowpea plant produced by the method of claim 13.

15. A method of producing a cowpea plant with modified fatty acid metabolism or modified carbohydrate metabolism wherein the method comprises transforming the cowpea plant of claim 2 with a transgene encoding a protein selected from the group consisting of fructosyltransferase, levansucrase, α -amylase, invertase and starch branching enzyme or encoding an antisense of stearyl-ACP desaturase.

16. A cowpea plant having modified fatty acid metabolism or modified carbohydrate metabolism produced by the method of claim 15.

17. A method of introducing a desired trait into cowpea cultivar 92-674 wherein the method comprises:

- (a) crossing a 92-674 plant, wherein a representative sample of seed was deposited under ATCC Accession No. PTA-7417, with a plant of another cowpea cultivar that comprises a desired trait to produce progeny plants wherein the desired trait is selected from the group consisting of male sterility, herbicide resistance, insect resistance, modified fatty acid metabolism, modified carbohydrate metabolism and resistance to bacterial disease, fungal disease or viral disease;
- (b) selecting one or more progeny plants that have the desired trait to produce selected progeny plants;
- (c) crossing the selected progeny plants with the 92-674 plants to produce backcross progeny plants;
- (d) selecting for backcross progeny plants that have the desired trait and the physiological and morphological characteristics of cowpea cultivar 92-674 listed in Table 1 to produce selected backcross progeny plants; and
- (e) repeating steps (c) and (d) three or more times in succession to produce selected fourth or higher backcross progeny plants that comprise the desired trait and all of the physiological and morphological characteristics of cowpea cultivar 92-674 listed in Table 1.

18. A method of producing a male sterile cowpea plant wherein the method comprises transforming the cowpea plant of claim 2 with a nucleic acid molecule that confers male sterility.

19. A male sterile cowpea plant produced by the method of claim 18.

* * * * *